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TAGS: [PREL](#) [MASS](#) [NATO](#) [AU](#) [SU](#) [UN](#)
SUBJECT: SPECIAL ENVOY NATSIOS MEETS WITH NATO SECRETARY
GENERAL

REF: A) KHARTOUM 2845 B) ADDIS ABABA 3243

Classified By: Ambassador Victoria Nuland for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

1. (C) Summary. Special Envoy to Sudan Andrew Natsios met December 15 with NATO Secretary General (SYG) de Hoop Scheffer to discuss the situation in Darfur, relations between NATO and the African Union (AU), and the spread of instability into Chad and the Central African Republic. Natsios said diplomatic means are needed to persuade the Sudanese government to change its policies; if not, tougher coercive measures will be the next step. De Hoop Scheffer noted NATO had recently extended its support for the AU Mission in Sudan (AMIS) to June 2007, and said he would be receptive to any request to NATO to help transport UN forces into Chad, should such a mission take place. End Summary.

2. (C) Natsios recounted his recent meeting with Sudanese President Bashir (Ref. A), including a discussion on allowing UN "blue hatted" troops into Darfur. The SYG described NATO assistance to AMIS, noting this support is being carried out with a "low profile," in part due to African political sensitivities.

3. (C) Natsios said it is necessary to persuade the Sudanese to voluntarily change their policies in Darfur. Diplomatic efforts must be made to engage China, Arab nations, and the Arab League to pressure the Sudanese to cease attacks against non-combatants. He noted the Sudanese have "walked back" the agreement reached November 16 in Addis Ababa on UN assistance to AMIS. In turn, the AU Peace and Security Council meeting held November 30 in Abuja had adopted a weaker version of the agreement (Ref. B). If Bashir cannot proceed with the Addis agreement, said Natsios, there may be a need to take coercive steps, beginning with targeted economic and financial sanctions. Responding to a discussion of military steps that could be taken against the Sudanese, de Hoop Scheffer commented that these steps might be better taken by a coalition of countries willing to act, rather than by NATO.

4. (C) Natsios observed that the Darfur crisis was spreading instability into Chad and the Central African Republic, adding this had led the French to become more aggressive militarily in the area. He discussed the possibility of a UN force being located in Chad along the border with Darfur. The SYG said he would be "receptive to any request" to help put a force into Chad. De Hoop Scheffer wondered where the UN would find the troops to man such a force adding that drawing any UN troops out of southern Sudan would be a mistake.

5. (C) The SYG told Natsios that NATO had recently committed to continue assistance to AMIS through June of 2007. He described increasing levels of confidence between NATO and the AU, and said there is much more NATO could do in the provision of "enablers." He then reiterated the idea that NATO could provide similar assistance in other parts of the region, again mentioning potential support for any UN mission to Chad. He said NATO can also do more training of AU forces, including the African Standby Force, while cautioning that there are "political hurdles" to clear first. (Comment: France opposes any training role for NATO in Africa. End Comment.)

6. (C) Natsios said the AU appears somewhat "torn" regarding NATO assistance - they appreciate and need the assistance, but still see NATO as representing former colonial powers. However, there is a growing perception in Africa that the situation in Darfur is bad and getting worse, and that more action is needed. The SYG opined that the citizens of Darfur can only be protected if there are adequate peacekeeping forces on the ground, coupled with a political settlement. Natsios suggested the need for additional protocols to the Darfur Peace Agreement to bring more rebel groups into the peace process.

17. (C) Natsios described high levels of corruption within AMIS, including looting of equipment, material and fuel provided by international donors. The SYG said that, despite these problems, the AU is the only interlocutor NATO currently has, and therefore will need to continue providing support. Natsios said he had recently called AU PSC Commissioner Djinnit, recommending the removal of AMIS Force Commander Major General Aprezi (a Nigerian). NATO DASG for

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Operations Jochems suggested that, given the recent extension of AMIS, the weight of Nigeria within the AU, and the fact that Aprezi was only recently appointed, now was not the best time to replace the commander.

18. (C) Comment: De Hoop Scheffer emphasized to Natsios his interest and ties to Africa (he was posted to Ghana early in his career), and is personally troubled by the situation in Darfur. During this meeting, he was actively looking for ways to increase NATO involvement in Africa. End Comment.

19. (U) SE Natsios' staff has cleared this cable.
NULAND